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It Sounds Better as Intelligence

WASHINGTON, they tell us, is dismayed. It has been caught with its veracity down. Sometimes what this country needs is a first-class liar. After all, that is what propaganda usually is—international lying carried on with intent to advance national policy or national prestige.

The fact that a spy was operating over Russian territory is really good news to fainthearted patriots in and out of Congress. The fact that he was caught, of course, is unfortunate. But consider the unmistakable implications:

1. The United States has a bold and an enterprising spy system. Granted enough airplanes swift enough in charge of men willing to die, if necessary, in the service of the country—and you get results. The chances of a spy operating in enemy territory are usually estimated at 50-50. It is the 50 per cent who return with information who make the whole hazardous, undertaking rewarding and worth while.

2. Russia now knows that we have not been asleep. Allen Dulles and his men have been busy. Russia knows,

In other words, that the United States knows.

3. It is time for Americans in and out of Congress to realize that Dwight Eisenhower knows what Russia has and what Russia is up to. It is the business of Allen Dulles to find out about that and to report. It is time to let the President act on the information he has—and to follow his recommendations for defense.

4. The usual custom when a spy is detected is to keep quiet about it. If we have shot any Russians down, we do better if we say nothing and learn all we can from them. The fact that Russia did otherwise shows that Russia is worried and that Russia is laying the groundwork for the failure of the summit conference.

5. A lie is the escape hatch of diplomacy and a very present help in time of espionage. It sounds better when we call it the intelligence service. But espionage and counterespionage are still indispensable in a world threatened by a Soviet dictatorship of the entire world.

6. It is time for Washington to decide who calls the signals—and let him call them.